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# CHIN 101.02: Elementary Chinese

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*University of Montana, Missoula*

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**Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures**

**Chinese 101 - Elementary Chinese**

**Fall Semester 2018**

**Instructors:** Dr. Cao Zhen

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**Office hours:** M.W.F. 12 noon~1:00pm T & TH: 1pm -2pm

**General Introduction and Course Objectives:**

Elementary Chinese is designed for people with no prior knowledge of the language and is not open to students from Chinese-speaking countries. The dialect taught is Mandarin, known in China as putonghua ("the standard language") and in Taiwan as guoyu ("the national language.") This is a five-credit course, with five hours of classes per week. You are also required to spend two hours per week in the Language Laboratory or home working with audio materials for the current lesson in the textbook.

Our goal in first year is to develop beginning-level proficiency in speaking and understanding Chinese, as well as make progress with learning how to read and write the language. By the end of the semester you should be able to converse on a variety of simple topics related to daily life and know how to read and write some 300 characters. A further objective will be to introduce you to elements of traditional and contemporary Chinese society through the language. This will be done informally and not be part of the evaluation process.

Learning Chinese poses more challenges than most languages, because of the writing system, the general absence of loan and cognate words, and because Chinese is a tonal language. To succeed, you need to be motivated and have good study habits: above all, you must be able to work consistently and on a daily basis rather than in fits and starts. A fair amount of rote learning and memorization is required, especially for learning the characters. Outside of class time you should plan on spending 60-90 minutes per day on homework, which will include preparation and review. This is not a good course for anyone with an extremely heavy credit load or many extra time commitments.

Besides first- through third-year Chinese, we offers various courses in Chinese literature and culture each semester. These are taught in English and nearly all have no prerequisites or language requirement. A minor in Chinese is offered, consisting of 24 language credits (four semesters of Chinese) and nine literature/culture credits. Please see us for further information if you have any questions. Note that courses counting toward the minor may not be taken on a CR/NC basis.

Opportunities for continuing your study of Chinese in China or Taiwan are plentiful and are relatively easy to arrange. Most Chinese language programs in these countries will admit you at any stage of your learning experience and most offer summer and January courses as well as their regular year-long and degree programs. Anyone planning on

a career using Chinese should spend a year or two in China or Taiwan, preferably enrolled full-time in language courses. The strategy of acquiring proficiency by going to China/Taiwan and teaching English is less than ideal, because you will likely end up speaking more English than Chinese.

If you plan to go on to second- or third-year Chinese, you should do so immediately after your first year. Students who interrupt their studies usually find they have forgotten most of their Chinese by the time they re-enter the program.

#### **Course Procedures, Evaluation and Expectations:**

We start with an introduction to the Chinese language, briefly covering its origins, history, and some general characteristics. From there, we move to foundation work, focusing on pronunciation, the four tones, and the pinyin system for romanizing Chinese. In the second week we begin with the individual numbered lessons in the textbook, covering a lesson roughly every week and a half.

1. Tests. These will typically be held after each lesson, and the score for every test, except your lowest one, counts toward your final grade. Note that each test covers not just the most recent lesson but earlier material as well, so please keep up with your reviewing! The occasional test may be a take-home, but the majority will be in-class, lasting the entire 50 minutes. There will be a final examination but no mid-term. Note that the final exam is on the entire semester's work. Makeups are not permitted unless you have a note from Student Health Services or your physician. For reasons of privacy, the note does not have to state the nature of your illness. All assigned homework must be completed and given to your instructor by the specified deadline. Late work will only be accepted in special circumstances and when permission has been granted in advance.

2. Attendance is taken daily and you are expected to attend all classes. Anyone absent five times will be given a failing grade for the course. Classes begin at exactly on the hour – we take a dim view of lateness, so please make sure you are always on time. If before Chinese you have another class at some distant part of the campus, making punctuality a problem, let us know. Unexcused excessive late arrivals will be counted as absences.

3. Grades. Your overall course grade will be calculated according to the following percentages:

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Tests.....                                | 40% |
| Quizzes & home work .....                 | 15% |
| Class participation and performance ..... | 15% |
| Final Examination.....                    | 30% |

#### **Class Text:**

*Integrated Chinese (Level 1 Part 1, Third Edition)*, published by Cheng & Tsui Co., Boston. Traditional Character edition. # vols. ---**Textbook**, **Workbook**, and **Character Workbook**. This series is used by many of the top Chinese programs in the United States. There are various helpful websites and electronic resources pertaining to this textbook and you are encouraged to make use of these: more on this later.

### **Class Schedule**

1. Week of Monday, August 27<sup>th</sup>:

Introduction to the Chinese language. Foundation work and exercises on tones, pronunciation, the pinyin romanization system, and characters.

2. Week of Tuesday, September 3  
(Monday is Labor Day, a holiday.)

Foundation work continued.

3. Week of Monday, September 10:

Lesson 1

4. Week of Monday, September 17:

Lesson 1 continued and Lesson 2

5. Week of Monday, September 24:

Lesson 2 continued

6. Week of Monday, October 1:

Lesson 3

7. Week of Monday, October 8:

Lesson 3 continued and Lesson 4

8. Week of Monday, October 15:

Lesson 4 continued and Lesson 5

9. Week of Monday, October 22:

Lesson 5 continued

10. Week of Monday, October 29:

Lesson 6

11. Week of Monday, November 5:

Lesson 6 continued

12. Week of Monday, November 12:

## Lesson 7

13. Week of Monday, November 19:

Wed-Thu-Fri: Gan'en jie 感恩節 (Thanksgiving). Don't eat too much huoji. 火雞 (turkey)!

Lesson 7 continued

14. Week of Monday, November 26:

## Lesson 8

15. Week of Monday, December 3: lesson 8 and Review

Week of Monday, December 11: Monday and Tuesday: Review continued

Final Examinations:

Chin 101 (section 1, 11:00am-11:50am) 8:am-10am, Friday December 14<sup>th</sup>.  
Chin 101 (section 2, 2:00pm-2:50pm) 1:10pm-3:10pm Tuesday December 11<sup>th</sup>.

NOTE: University regulations strictly forbid giving exams prior to exam week, so please take this into account when making any travel plans, plane reservations, etc.

Further Important Information:

1. This course uses pluses and minuses in its grading. The lowest credit-receiving grade is D minus, the highest possible course grade a straight A, not A+.
2. Note that you need to select the traditional grading option if you are planning to have this course count toward fulfillment of the Chinese Minor and/or General Education requirements.
3. Auditors: Anyone auditing the class must formally enroll as an auditor.
4. Anyone with a learning or medical disability and in need of special arrangements must inform us of this fact at the beginning of the course. People with such disabilities must provide documentary proof of their status.